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A Tidal Wave of Published Data More Than 30 Studies in Last Five Years Show Negative Impact of Abortion on Women Priscilla Coleman, Ph.D.

On Sunday, November 7th, the Washington Post published an opinion piece by Dr. Brenda Major, titled *The Big Lie about Abortion and Mental Health*. I would like to offer another perspective on dishonesty permeating the scientific study and dissemination of information pertaining to abortion and mental health.

Dr. Major is absolutely correct: an [informed choice regarding abortion](#) must be based on accurate information. For abortion providers to offer an unbiased and valid synopsis of the scientific literature on increased risks of abortion, the information must include depression, substance abuse, and anxiety disorders, including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), as well as suicide ideation and behaviors.

Over 30 studies have been published in just the last five years and they add to a body of literature comprised of hundreds of studies published in major medicine and psychology journals throughout the world. The [list is provided below](#) and the conscientious reader is encouraged to check the studies out. No lies ... just scientifically-derived information that individual academics, several major professional organizations, and abortion providers have done their best to hide and distort in recent years.

Like Dr. Major, I too am a tenured, full professor at a well-respected U.S. university, and I too have published peer-reviewed scientific articles in reputable journals. In fact, my publication record far exceeds that of Dr. Major on the topic of abortion and mental health. I am not alone in my opinion, which has been voiced by prominent researchers in Great Britain, Norway, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, the U.S., and elsewhere.

As a group of researchers who in 2008 published nearly 50 peer-reviewed articles indicating abortion is associated with negative psychological outcomes, six colleagues and I sent a petition letter to the American Psychological Association (APA) criticizing their methods and conclusions as described in their [Task Force Report on Abortion and Mental Health](#).

The opinion piece by Brenda Major following on the heels of the highly-biased APA report is just the latest effort to divert attention from a tidal wave of sound published data on the emotional consequences of abortion. The evidence is accumulating,

despite socio-political agendas to keep the truth from the academic journals and ultimately from women to insure that the big business of abortion continues unimpeded. The literature now echoes the voices of millions of women for whom abortion was not a liberating, health promoting "choice." A conservative estimate from the best available data is 20 to 30 percent of women who undergo an abortion will experience serious and/or prolonged negative consequences.

Any interpretation of the available research that does not acknowledge the strong evidence now available in the professional literature represents a conscious choice to ignore basic principles of scientific integrity.

The human fallout to such a choice by the APA and like-minded colleagues is misinformed professionals, millions of women struggling in isolation to make sense of a past abortion, thousands who will undergo an abortion today without the benefit of known risks, and millions who will make this often life-altering decision tomorrow without the basic right of informed consent, which is routinely extended for all other elective surgeries in the U.S.

In publishing Major's opinion without soliciting other voices on the topic, the *Washington Post* has perpetuated a serious injustice.

(published 11/16/2010)

List of Studies

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**Learn more:** For more information on the APA Task Force on abortion and mental health, visit [www.abortionrisks.org](http://www.abortionrisks.org).

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